TITLE
AN EXEGETICAL STUDY ON JOB 3:10-26: ITS IMPLICATION TO COMFORTING THE DEPRESSED IN THE PRAYER HOUSE OF JESUS MINISTRIES, YANAM

1. Statement of the Problem

Depression has emerged as a pressing issue in both secular and Christian contexts, affecting spiritual vitality, emotional stability, and community relationships. Job 3:10-26 presents one of the Bible's most vivid portrayals of anguish, showing that even godly individuals experience deep despair. This passage discusses practical pastoral strategies specifically for Prayer House of Jesus Ministries in Yanam. This study offering a biblically grounded, contextually relevant framework for comforting the depressed.

2. Elaboration of the Problem

Depression is one of the most significant emotional and spiritual challenges facing modern believers. It affects not only individuals in the secular world but also faithful Christians within the church. People experience discouragement, hopelessness, and a sense of abandonment due to factors such as poverty, illness, family conflict, and loneliness. These feelings often create a deep inner struggle between faith and despair. As Tim LaHaye observes, "even sincere Christians can wrestle with inner darkness while holding on to faith in God's sovereignty."[1]

In the P.H.J., Yanam, many members face economic difficulties, unemployment, and relational breakdowns. These realities gradually erode spiritual vitality and emotional strength. Although pastors and leaders desire to help, their efforts often remain limited to brief exhortations such as "pray harder" or "believe more." Such responses, while well-intentioned, fail to address the psychological and emotional dimensions of depression. According to Matilda Nordtvedt, simplistic spiritual answers can sometimes deepen a sufferer's sense of guilt and isolation, making recovery even more difficult.[2]

---

[1] Tim LaHaye, *The Coming Peace in the Middle East* (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 45-46.
LaHaye discusses the believer's inner conflicts and the need to find peace amid global and personal turmoil, illustrating that faith and emotional struggle can coexist.
[2] Matilda Nordtvedt, *Defeating Despair and Depression* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), 23-25.

The experience of Job in chapter 3 of the Old Testament provides a profound biblical model for understanding the reality of depression. Job's cry of anguish in Job 3 shows that even a righteous person can experience the depths of emotional pain. His lament demonstrates that expressions of sorrow and despair are not signs of unbelief but honest engagement with God in moments of darkness. Frank B. Minirth and Paul D. Meier emphasize that acknowledging emotional pain is the first step toward healing, because true faith does not deny suffering but seeks God's presence within it.[3]

There remains a gap between biblical theology and pastoral practice. While Scripture gives room for lament, churches often lack training in addressing mental and emotional struggles. David A. Seamands points out that many believers carry "damaged emotions" that are never properly healed because the church overlooks the need for emotional restoration alongside spiritual encouragement.[4] Eugene Kennedy and Sara C. Charles emphasize the importance of listening, empathy, and nonjudgmental care as essential skills for any pastoral helper aiming to support the depressed.[5]

Therefore, this study argues that the example of Job 3:10-26 can guide the P.H.J. in forming a compassionate and biblically grounded pastoral response to depression. As LaHaye further notes, the theology of the cross affirms that human suffering is not devoid of meaning but serves as the locus where divine power engages human limitation.by applying these insights, the church can move beyond superficial words and embody Christ's healing presence among those who suffer.

Research Questions

- What is the literary, historical, and theological context of Job 3:10-26?
- Why do the people suffer?

Nordtvedt explains that shallow spiritual advice can increase guilt in depressed Christians instead of offering true comfort.

[3] Frank B. Minirth and Paul D. Meier, *Happiness Is a Choice: A Manual on the Symptoms, Causes, and Cures of Depression* (Michigan: Baker Book House,1978), 18-21.
They highlight the importance of honest emotional acknowledgment and the role of faith in emotional healing.

[4] David A. Seamands, *Healing for Damaged Emotions* (England: Victor Books,2015), 35-40.
Seamands emphasizes the need for inner healing and pastoral understanding of emotional wounds.

[5] Eugene Kennedy and Sara C. Charles, *On Becoming a Counsellor: A Basic Guide for Nonprofessional Counsellors and Other Helpers* (Mumbai: Better Yourself Books,2001), 12-14.
The authors stress the importance of empathy, presence, and listening in Christian counseling.

- How does this passage reflect the biblical perspective on human suffering and despair?
- What are the pastoral principles for comforting the depressed can be drawn from Job's lament?
- How can these principles be contextualized in PHJ Ministries, Yanam?
- What personal or observed struggles with depression motivated this study?

3. Hypothesis (***hypothesis is your assumption of the solution of the problem***)

A rigorous exegetical study of Job 3:10-26 will show that Scripture validates the depths of human anguish without diminishing faith. When its theological insights are applied through culturally sensitive pastoral care, they may equip PHJ Ministries to more effectively comfort individuals struggling with depression.

4. Importance of the Study

This study offers a new understanding of Job 3:10-26 and its message about human suffering. It helps PHJ Ministries use the Bible to guide and support people who feel depressed. It also shows how the ancient words of lament in Job can still speak meaningfully to people in India today. By connecting careful study of the Bible with practical ministry, this work fills an important gap between academic research and real-life pastoral care.

5. Scope and Limitations

Scope and limitation, just focus which passage and in which area

The scope this research to analyze the Job 3:10-26 Hebrew text, literary structure, historical background, and theological themes. Application will be tailored to PHJ Ministries, Yanam. Its focus is exegetical and pastoral. This research is limited with in P.H.J Ministries, Yanam, which comes under Yanam District.

6. Method of Study

This study begins with an in-depth look at Job 3:10-26 through a historical-grammatical method, examining its poetic form, key Hebrew words, and the historical and cultural background of Job's story. It then reflects on important theological themes such as suffering, lament, God's hiddenness,

and human despair. From these insights, the study draws out pastoral lessons that highlight the importance of acknowledging pain, being present with those who suffer, and encouraging honest faith. Finally, it applies these principles to PHJ Ministries by engaging in pastoral conversations, reviewing current ministry practices, and reflecting on how Job's message can guide real-life ministry in the Indian context.

7. Sources of the Research

Primary sources consist chiefly of the **Hebrew Bible** and the **English Bible**, alongside essential linguistic tools such as biblical dictionaries, lexicons, and concordances that aid in understanding key terms and textual nuances.

Secondary sources include a broad body of scholarly literature. This study engages major **biblical commentaries** on Job. It also incorporates influential theological **writings on suffering.** Pastoral insights are further informed by **counseling and shepherding materials.** In addition, this research interacts with **relevant journal articles, academic essays, and contemporary scholarly discussions** that contribute to the interpretation of Job and the theology of suffering.

Furthermore, contextual resources are drawn from **practical ministry insights** shared by leaders of P.H.J. Ministries. Their experiences and ongoing pastoral practices provide valuable real-world perspectives that help bridge the gap between biblical interpretation and applied ministry.

8. Previous Researches

Research on pastoral care among youths in Kerala and the wider Indian context has focused largely on stress, depression, and anxiety, but has not examined the theological resources of lament texts such as Job 3 in depth. For example, studies such as **Developing a Pastoral Care Model for the Depressed Youths in Kunnamkulam Municipal Area** emphasize psychosocial approaches, identifying emotional, familial, and societal factors contributing to depression. Similarly, the study entitled **Developing a Pastoral Care Model to Address Stress Among Adolescents with Internet Addiction** explores behavioral patterns and proposes intervention strategies rooted in counseling and awareness programs. Another work, **Developing a Pastoral Care Model for the Anxiety of Youths within Mulayara Church of God**, focuses on congregational pastoral practices

and anxiety management techniques. While these studies make significant contributions to pastoral care in Kerala, they do not engage biblical lament particularly Job's lament as a pastoral theological resource for youth care.

Biblical scholarship has also provided rich insights into the Book of Job. Scholars such as **David Clines, Tremper Longman III, and C. L. Seow** underscore the theological complexity, literary artistry, and existential depth of Job. However, their analyses rarely include explicit pastoral applications. In particular, Job 3:10-26 Job's raw and unfiltered lament has not been explored for its potential contribution to pastoral care with suffering adolescents or youths experiencing psychological distress.

Within the field of biblical counseling, authors like **Jay Adams** and **Edward Welch** emphasize the sufficiency of Scripture and the importance of addressing suffering with biblical truth. Yet their works generally lack focused exegetical engagement with Job's lament passages. As a result, the pastoral application of texts like Job 3 remains underdeveloped in their frameworks.

Pastoral theologians such as **John Swinton** and **Henri Nouwen** explore themes of suffering, presence, companionship, and the ministry of listening. Their writings provide valuable concepts for pastoral caregivers, but they seldom apply these concepts directly to Job's lament or integrate exegetical study of Job 3 into pastoral methodology.

Significance of the Present Study

This study fills a clear gap in the existing research by integrating careful exegesis of Job 3:10-26 with the development of a contextually relevant pastoral care model for youths in an Indian ministry context. Unlike previous pastoral care studies conducted in Kerala, the present study brings biblical lament specifically Job's expression of despair into dialogue with contemporary psychological and pastoral concerns of depressed or distressed youth. It seeks to show how Job's honest lament can inform pastoral approaches that validate suffering, encourage emotional expression, and promote spiritual resilience among youths. This combination of biblical exegesis, pastoral theology, and contextual application represents a unique and valuable contribution to both scholarship and ministry practice.

9. Chapter Scheme

Chapter 1 - Historical Background & Context

Chapter 2 - Exegetical Study of Job 3:10-26

Chapter 3 - Pastoral Application for Comforting the Depressed in Prayer House of Jesus Ministries, Yanam

10. Bibliography

Andersen, Francis I. *Job: An Introduction and Commentary.* Downers Grove: IVP, 1976.

Clines, David J. A. *Job 1-20.* Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word, 1989.

Hartley, John E. *The Book of Job.* NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

Longman, Tremper III. *Job.* Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.

Seow, C. L. *Job 1-21: Interpretation and Commentary.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013.

Swinton, John. *Raging with Compassion: Pastoral Responses to the Problem of Evil.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.

Welch, Edward T. *Depression: Looking Up from the Stubborn Darkness.* Phillipsburg: P&R, 2004.

Nouwen, Henri J. M. *The Wounded Healer.* New York: Image Books, 1979.